IV. *A Letter from Mr.* Ralph Thoresby, *F. R. S. to Dr.* Hans Sloane, *R. S. Sec. concerning ſome Ancient Braſs Inſtruments found in* Yorkſhire.

Honoured SIR,

WEapons of Braſs having been diſcontinued for many Ages, it may not perhaps be unacceptable to you to have an Account of ſome that were lately found in theſe Parts; for what uſe they were originally deſigned I dare not determine, ſo ſhall only relate Matter of Fact as to the diſcovery of them, and give you their form, deſiring your Sentiments of them, and ſuch ingenious Gentlemen as you may pleaſe to communicate this unto.

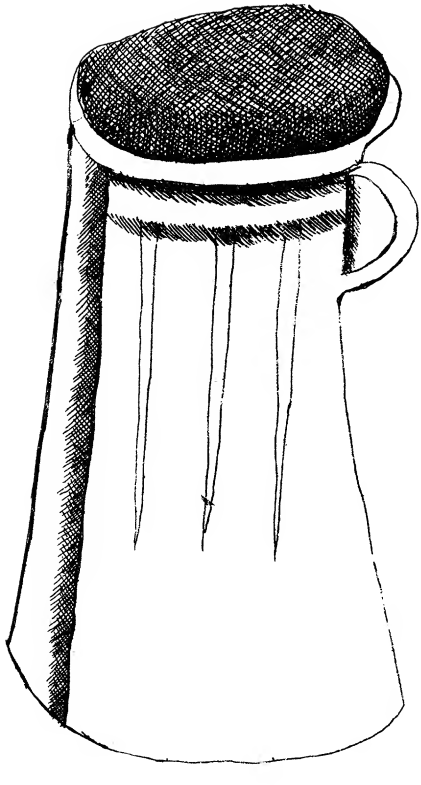
As the Servants of Mr. *Ellis* of *Kiddal* (Father to the preſent Sheriff of the County) were Plowing in a Place called *Oſmond-thick*, near the noted *Bramham-Moor*, they diſcovered five or ſix Braſs Inſtruments, which are of different ſizes, from little more than 3 to 4 Inches and an half in length, and from 1 and a half to 2 Inches and an half in breadth: They are ſomewhat in the form of a Wedge, as proceeding from a thin Edge, which after ſo many Ages is tollerably ſharp, to 1 and an half or 2 Inches at the thicker end, where they are wrought hollow to put upon a Shaft: Each of them has an Ear or Loop, which that you may the better perceive the form of, I have added the Figure of one (in its exact ſize) that was ſent to this Repoſitory. Some ſuppoſe them to have been *Arrows-heads*, or *Axes* of the ancient *Britains*; others, thoſe of the *Roman Catapultæ*; but I think they are as much to heavy for the firſt, as they are too

See the Plate at the beginning.

too light for the laſt. I ſhould rather take them to have been the *Heads* of *Spears*, or *Walking-ſtaves* of the civilized *Britains*; and tho' of a ſomewhat different Form from thoſe deſcribed by *Speed* (*Hiſt. of Great Brit. cap. 6.*) in their Portraitures, taken I preſume from ancient Manuſcripts, yet by the Loop in the ſide we may better conceive how thoſe ornamental Labels were faſtened, than by the Pictures there exemplified.

That *Swords* or *Daggers* were uſed of the ſame Metal in old time, as well in *Ireland* as *Great Britain*, (of which there are ſeveral deſcribed in the laſt Edition of the *Britannia*) I conjecture from ſome that were found there of late Years, one of which was brought me by a Friend from thence: It proves of a middle ſize, *viz.* eighteen Inches long in the Blade; whereas of thoſe found in *Wales*, ſome were but Twelve, others Twenty four. The Hilt or Handle probably was of Wood, (as is that of an old Sword that I have now by me, which is five Foot and a half long) for that it is wholly conſumed: They have been faſtened together by four larger or two leſs Nails, as appears by the Holes in the Braſs which are yet entire. And now that I am upon this ſubject, I have an ancient Spur, that is no leſs than ſix Inches and an half long, from the Heel to the middle of the Rowel; but this, which is gilded, and of nicer Workmanſhip, I ſuppoſe to be of a much later date.

I am, &c.

Ralph Thoresby.

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